

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Rainbow Falls Connection

Hawaii HTDC- MEP

Rainbow Falls Connection Increases Productivity

Client Profile:

Rainbow Falls Connection (RFC) operates under the Hawaii County Economic Opportunity Council, a non-profit organization that creates programs to assist clients in becoming self-sufficient. Rainbow Falls Connection encompasses incubator kitchens, a gift shop, food manufacturing, honey production and related marketing activities. The company employs 16 people at its facility in Hilo, Hawaii.

Situation:

RFC's food manufacturing sector is known for their lavosh (a crisp, flat bread), from original to the flavored (such as passion fruit butter, cinnamon sugar, macadamia nut, etc), to chocolate-dipped. They also produce fruit butter spreads and cookies. With a limited working area and enthusiastic marketing personnel, production became an issue for RFC. The lavosh could not be produced fast enough to meet demand. In order to grow, RFC needed to increase productivity and reduce costs. The company contacted Hawaii HTDC- MEP (Hawaii MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help.

Solution:

When Hawaii MEP initially visited the operations, almost everything was done by hand. The lavosh ingredients were scooped into a bowl and mixed by hand. It was then rolled out with a rolling pin and cut out individually, baked in small ovens, and manually packed and sealed in bags. After observing and reviewing the company's operations, product labels, sanitation, and formulas, Hawaii MEP recommended some changes in the layout of the production area. The company invested in a sheeter to eliminate most of the hand rolling operation and a horizontal form fill seal unit to eliminate packaging in cellophane bags by hand. They also purchased a sprayer to spray on various flavors, which was previously brushed on by hand, plus a new freezer and over wrap machine. As a result of Hawaii MEP's assistance, productivity has increased; and, with the new packaging, RFC is able to tap into new markets.

Results:

- * Increased sales by 80 percent.
- * Invested \$350,000 in plant equipment and workforce development.
- * Achieved a more competitive and profitable position.

Testimonial:

"We knew we had to expand but didn't know how. Hawaii HTDC's expertise in technical services, and especially equipment, has been very valuable to us. We know we can always call on her for help."

George Hanohano, Kitchen Manager

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP
Success Stories from the Field